

KEYNOTE ADDRESS AND PRESS CONFERENCE  
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AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS  
DETROIT REGIONAL CONFERENCE

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P R E S S   C O N F E R E N C E

PRESIDENT SHANKER: Thank you, very much.

That was quite a testimonial resolution but I hope that you won't repeat that description of what vouchers might be used for, because the idea might get more support.

The theme of this meeting and more than this meeting, the theme for the AFT for this year and perhaps for a number of years to come, deals with the professionalization of teachers.

Now, if someone had told me a few years ago that this would be our theme, I would have had some rather strong arguments, because the concept and word, "professional/professionalism" has a rather bad name among teachers.

I remember that when I began teaching in 1952, I was told on the one hand that you should not join the AFT because it was the "professional" organization, so that is one meaning of the word that I am sure remains in our memories. And it is still, even though our rival now calls itself a union, it is still something that works against us.

And then I had a number of experiences in the school in which I worked. It was an elementary school. It was on the upper west side of Manhattan. And it was a period

of time when dozens of airplanes were flying in every hour and bringing literally hundreds of thousands of students to New York from Puerto Rico. And I started, began my teaching career in a school that had a great many difficulties. I was waiting for help, hoping that someone would come in and show me what I was doing wrong and give me some pointers. I had great difficulty.

And then a number of weeks after I started teaching, sure enough, the door opened and there was an assistant principal and I said to myself, Thank God, somebody is here and will come in and spend a few hours with me, and things will be maybe much better.

And as I stood there welcoming him into the door, he stood about one half in and one half out and he just had his whole arm out like this and he was pointing and I was asking him to come in and after what seemed to me like five or ten minutes or an hour, but was probably only 15 or 20 seconds, he just looked at me and said, Mr. Shanker, there is a piece of paper on the floor over there, and that is very unprofessional.

So that was another introduction to that word, unprofessional. A few weeks later, we had our first faculty

conference, and those were days in which very few men taught in the elementary schools and I was the second male teacher in the school. The tradition in that school was that there was a schedule made up and it was handed out at the beginning of each year and it had all the things: yard duty; toilet duty; and cafeteria duty and all of those things. It also had snow patrol. Snow patrol meant that whenever it snowed the male member of the faculty gave up his lunch hour and walked around the building telling kids not to throw snowballs at each other.

So as the duty schedule was handed out, this time the two of us were on the schedule. And the other fellow raised his hand, and asked the principal and he said, now that there are two of us, could we rotate snow patrol? You know, I take the first one and he goes the second day so that we could have a lunch period every other day.

And the principal lashed back saying that that was very unprofessional.

For two reasons, one was that the schedule had already been lexographed, and the other was that it showed a great lack of concern for the health and welfare of children because a child might throw a snowball at another child hitting

him in the eye and it might blind him and this showed that we did not care about the children.

A few months later there was another incident, not at the school, but it was an incident that gained some national attention. At the Parklane High School in Mt. Kisco, New York, a teacher by the name of James Wally, who had been there for many, many years and you know, principals came and they went to other schools and they became superintendents. And a new principal came into the school and James Wally was one of these outstanding teachers, he had a file bulging with outstanding evaluations from every principal who had ever been in any school where he had taught.

Now, this new principal decided that he was going to show, as he said to his faculty, when he addressed them at the first faculty conferene, just before school opened, he was going to show that the teachers in this school are the most professional teachers in this system and perhaps in the whole country.

And he said the way to show this is to show that we are willing to plan ahead and to sacrifice for the children and therefore, he said, to members of his faculty, I ask that all of you go home and this weekend before school

begins, I would expect that next week, you will come in with a lesson by lesson, detailed plan book for the entire year in advance.

A planning on a week by week basis is really not planning at all, he said, and that is what those lazy people do in other schools. But we are real professionals and we are going to map out the entire year in advance.

And so all of the other teachers in the school, being professionals, in the sense of being cheap in those days, went home and they did it. And Wally was the only one who did not do it. He went into his principal and he said, look, I am an outstanding teacher, you can look at the files and you can call people who have been principals here before, and I am certainly willing to write an essay on what I expect to accomplish this year and some of the new things that I expect to do.

I am willing to give you an overview, I am willing to do things on a monthly basis, which will give you some more detail, but you know, things change, I have not even met these students yet. And for me to develop a plan book that is detailed for the prior year in advance, without my having even met the students, or without having an experience

of what kind of difficulties I am going to encounter in terms of implementing my plans, would be unprofessional, and I refuse to do it.

I will submit weekly plans and monthly overview, and add an essay on what I expect to do during the year and I will give you mid-course corrections as we go along. I will do anything that you want, that makes sense, but I am not going to do the lesson plan book, lesson-by-lesson, in advance.

James Wally was fired.

And he was fired because, obviously, he was not a professional. That is what the Court s ruled. He stayed fired. And what did professionalism mean to those Courts?

Well, it actually has nothing to do with being an expert, and it has nothing to do with knowing your stuff, if anybody was not professional, it was obviously the principal.

If anybody was not competent, in that situation, it was the principal. But the concept of professionalism there clearly had nothing to do with expertise or knowledge, it really meant insubordination.

It was a failure to follow orders. It was more a military concept than any other. And I could go on

with examples like these. That is the kind of concept of professionalism that most of us have grown up with. Therefore, whenever that word has been used in the past, I get a little sick to my stomach, and I have never gone around in the past to make speeches about professionalism because it has not had very much attractiveness, given that history.

But here we are with a conference devoted to professionalizing teaching. And with the major thrust led by the American Federation of Teachers.

So we have to ask ourselves, why in spite of this unhappy history that we have had in terms of the use of this word, in a field of teaching, why we are here?

And if we think back to previous conferences of this sort, we will remember that for many years, we had conferences like this one, on how to appeal to teachers to join the union.

Then we had a period of time when we went around the country trying to convince our locals that collective bargaining was a good thing, and we ought to press for collective bargaining, and how to engage in it.

And the reason that we moved toward collective bargaining was that from 1916 to 1960, the organization by



and large stood still. We won a little, and then we lost some and then we went up and then we lost but when we look back, in 1960, we essentially saw that we had gone through a major part of the first half of the century, and we stood still. And a few of us sat down and said, if we are to be significant in the lives of teachers, if we are to be significant in American education, then what we have learned from 1916 to the present time is not that we are a bad organization and not that we do not have good ideas or good ideals and aspirations, but that if we continue to do the things that we have been doing, in the past, we will continue to have about 50,000 members in the entire country.

While our ideas will be fine, we will not be a politically significant force nor will we have the power or the influence to be able to improve the lives of teachers.

And so, we moved toward collective bargaining and it is important to note that when we did this, as Phil said last night, it was risky. You could not have found five percent of the teachers in this country in 1960 who believed in collective bargaining. The majority of AFT members did not believe in collective bargaining. Did not know how it would apply in the current sector and it was risky because

generally you do not go out and ask for an election which will give one organization exclusive rights when you are in a small minority yourself.

And we were in a small minority.

Now, in moving toward collective bargaining, we did not, of course, abandon the ideals and principals that we had before. We embraced collective bargaining as a method of organizing teachers, and of gaining more power, of developing higher salaries. It was a way of bringing more people into the labor movement, and we were not saying that everything that we believed in before was no good. We were saying that everything that we believed in before was right, but the traditional method of going around and trying to sign up people one at a time, the individual conversion method, was not as good as the mass election exclusive representation method, and what we found essentially in collective bargaining, was not a change in direction or a change in principals but we developed a method of--if we could use a more industrial and commercial analogy--we developed a way of doing it wholesale rather than retail--or we developed a mass production device, as against the previous individual one.

And clearly, it was very effective, but even

during this period from 1960 to the present time, we and other unions have recognized that collective bargaining, in and of itself, is not enough.

First of all, we recognized that engaging in collective bargaining elections and organizing people was not necessarily the fastest way of bringing people into the organization. And so, at a certain point we said, why, now that the NEA is short of shaken up and now that they are also involved in collective bargaining, why don't we merge?

And the largest organizing effort that we ever engaged in that was successful was the merger in New York State which resulted in over 100,000 members coming into the AFT in one day.

Now, that too, we had conferences one year and we were doing exactly what we were doing now--running around the country trying to explain to our members why we have stopped clobbering them and hitting them over the head and why we brought them in through a merger and a compromise.

People felt that that was abandoning our traditional way of--I mean to sit down and work out an agreement which brings the organizations together, was somehow seen as so radically different from our traditional conflict, with

the other organization that it literally took about three years before the AFT officially came around and before the majority of our locals and the state federations across the country accepted the idea that merger was a legitimate way of building the organization.

And that and plus we have also recognized that there are other fields of endeavor and activity that we must be involved in. One of them is political action. Now, it hardly needs any explanation now as to why we are in political action.

But the strange thing is that the American Federation of Teachers has been around since 1916 but did not endorse a candidate until 1972. And did not really endorse one actually until 1976, because 1972 was more pro forma, which is again, an indication that even with collective bargaining which we do not abandon and which we seek to strengthen, we have found that there are limits to collective bargaining and that we must, in traditional ways of doing things and that in order to fulfill the objectives of the organization we constantly have to find new ways of realizing those same objectives.

So the question is why this direction now?

Why this emphasis on professionalizing teachers?  
Why the new direction? Is it necessary?

And I would like to state, up front, a few of the very, what I consider to be the strong powerful reasons as to why this is not just a nice idea, not just something where we are trying to do something new for the sake of novelty because we have grown tired of something that we were doing before. It is not just an effort at a public relations campaign because it is kind of interesting to do something that we have not done before and the unions generally have not done before, all of these may have some pluses, but they are very minor as reasons, in terms of our change in direction.

So let me list a few of them.

First and foremost, is that education in this country, public education is in great trouble. The President is pushing for vouchers and tuition tax credits. Half of the legislatures in this country have tuition tax credit, legislation and voucher legislation before them. Only four days ago, the New York State Senate passed a tuition tax credit bill in its Senate Education Committee, which will be debated and has a very good chance of passing the New York State Senate.

And if it passes the Senate, there will be

great pressure on the Assembly. The Governor has not committed himself to vetoing the legislation. He has said, in general, he favors aid to nonpublic schools, but he does not know whether he likes this legislation.

We could end this year or next year with a dozen states or more than a dozen states enacting tuition tax credit legislation and we all know what the consequences are there. So we have low public confidence in the schools even though the polls are going up a little bit. We have had declining scores, they seemed to have bottomed out but they are still low in comparison to where the public wants them to be and expects them to be.

We still have an immense dropout problem in all of our major cities, running 50 percent or more which makes it very difficult to turn to the public and say, that the schools are doing a great job if that is the kind of dropout rate that we have.

And so, we are in the same kind of position that the steel and auto industries were in maybe 15 years ago. They saw that people were starting to get unhappy and they saw that people were starting to buy Japanese automobiles and the union leaders and the industry leaders, they went

to Japan and they saw the robots being installed and they saw the quality control and they saw what was happening and they sat down and they said, how can we shape up our industries?

And when they realized what they would have to do, it would bring tremendous changes for management. It might bring great reductions in profits for the stockholders, because they would have to reinvest an awful lot of money. It would mean an awful lot of trouble for the union because it would perhaps mean a mechanization and computerization and robotization, and changes in work rules and they all looked at each other, and they said, these sacrifices are just too big to make. We cannot do it. Let's cross our fingers and let's hope that the American people won't buy Japanese cars, and they won't like the little ones and they won't understand the names. And even if they do like them, we are pretty strong, and if we all go down to Washington, we can get the President and the Congress to say that no Japanese cars can come into the country and we can limit the numbers.

They were very confident that they could somehow through sheer power prevent that industry from going down. Well, it did not happen.

And right now we are in a city which is constantly

dealing with the question of will there be an auto industry left in this country ten years from now? We are not a city that is just dealing with that, we are in a country that is dealing with that. And we are in a country that is asking the question of whether there will be a steel industry a few years from now?

Now, we could in public education be in exactly the same position, ten years from now, or five years from now. There might not be a public education system left. And I suggest to you that we take a look at what some of the people in the auto industry are doing.

What they are--what those who are successful are doing is that they are not merely making marginal changes. They are not just going out and putting better commercials on television, in order to try to get the auto industry in this country to survive, they are rebuilding this auto industry from the bottom up. They are starting with a blank piece of paper and saying, how can we end up with an industry in this country which is going to be able to compete with the Japanese, and there is nothing that is left unquestioned.

And unless I suggest to you, that unless we are willing to do that with public education, unless we are



willing to say, whether it is management rules, whether it is state regulations, whether it is union rules of contracts, whatever it is, unless we are willing to admit to ourselves that we are in great danger, and we may be driven out of business, and therefore, it is necessary for us to reconsider the entire institution.

And not assume that anything must be there, because that is the way that it was done in the past, or because it is going to make management angry or it is going to make our members angry or our teachers angry. If we are not willing to engage in that sort of discussion, we will probably not survive.

Second reason, aside from the question of education being in great trouble, and may not be able to survive, is the fact that we realize more and more collective bargaining alone will not get us or our members where we want to go, on a whole series of issues.

Now, let's ask ourselves, many of us were around before there was collective bargaining. Many of us were around before there was collective bargaining in our school districts or in our states. Now, suppose that we were to have an exercise right now and we were to write down on a sheet of paper,

all the things that we dreamt that we could do before we got collective bargaining, all the things that we wanted for teachers and we would have a list. Oh, yes, higher salaries, and better working conditions, and reductions in class size and some preparation time, and a grievance procedure so that it was not always the principals or the superintendents' word.

But I think that those would not have been the only things on the list. I think that we would have talked about a whole bunch of other issues. I think that we would have talked about the kind of respect and dignity for teachers that is accorded to other, highly educated people within our society. I think that we would have talked about teachers not being treated the way that James Wally was when he decided not to--that it was his right to develop his own plans, his right to make judgments as to what he had to do in his classroom. And his right to be relatively unsupervised.

We were thinking of really changing the entire status of the way that teachers are treated. We were thinking of, perhaps the right to select textbooks, or materials. A whole host of things. And if we were to now make that list, of all the things that we wanted and we dreamt about that we wanted to do for teachers and next to it, check off those

things that we were actually able to accomplish in collective bargaining, we would find two things. We would find first that we have an outstanding record of accomplishment, that indeed, there were a substantial number of important items that were on this list that we were able to accomplish.

And then we would also find that on this list that there were a number of things that we were not able to accomplish at all. As a matter of fact, collective bargaining enabled us to do some things and actually because management sits down and says, well, collective bargaining gives you the right to negotiate salaries and working conditions, but it does not give you any involvement in educational policy or professional matters, that is where the line is drawn. You have the right to fight for things that are narrowly and economically good for teachers, that is what collective bargaining is about. You do not have the right to sit here and tell us what is good for children, because that is not what collective bargaining is about or what is good for education, those are professional judgments and those are policy issues. And that is not what is on the bargaining table.

So, collective bargaining has been both a powerful tool for advancing teachers but at the same time, if we limit

ourselves to that, there is a line which is drawn which management says, traditionally you cannot go beyond that line in collective bargaining. And from a public image point of view, if we limit ourselves to collective bargaining, not only a public image point of view, but from the point of view of our own members, if we limit ourselves to that, we will really be abandoning a large number of issues which teachers want us to pursue.

And a third point that I would like to make is very closely related to the second, not only will collective bargaining not enable us and has not enabled us to achieve, and here I guess that I should say that after you have got collective bargaining, for a certain number of years, when you get it, you make some major breakthroughs. You get good salary increase for a number of years. You are able to do something about class size and about a whole bunch of fairness issues. Improve the grievance procedure, but there comes a time in collective bargaining, where after you have made progress for two, four, six, eight or nine years, there comes a point where you are working very hard and you are fighting and you are no longer really fighting to make things better, you are really fighting to hold onto what you have.

And now, you have got to do it, because if you do not fight hard to hold onto what you have, you are going to fall behind and you are going to go right back to where you were in the first place. But collective bargaining often--this is true in industry and it is true in the public sector and it is true in our sector as well--that while we must continue to pursue collective bargaining, that if that is all that we do, then 10 or 15 years from now, we will be able to pin medals on ourselves that we struggled for 10 or 15 or 20 years, in order to stand still. We are, in collective bargaining, in a sense on a treadmill.

It is a treadmill that we have got to run on or we will go backwards. But it is not something which 20 years from now will make us feel that from this point to that point we have once again elevated teachers and their position in our society from this point to a much higher one as we did when we took teachers from the unorganized state and got collective bargaining.

So we really want to achieve something and not just stand still and I assume that people here are not ritualists. We do not view ourselves, we do not spend our weekends at conferences and evenings at meetings, and we

don't spend our lives engaged in conflict and in struggle and in commitment because we are just fighting to stand still. But at each point when we have reached a plateau we look for new ways in which we can accomplish the purposes that we have set out to accomplish.

And so the third point is, not just a collective bargaining won't get us beyond a certain point, and to achieve many of the things what we want, but that we have to--but there are ways of going beyond collective bargaining that will achieve the things that we want to achieve.

Now, I would suggest that we look back at that concept of professionalism, because the one that I talked at the very beginning, where professionalism was really used in an Orwellian sense. You remember George Orwell in 1984 the children in that society were trained to become incapable of thinking because the way in which Big Brother could control you in that society was that every time that you would think of a certain political concept, you would think of its very opposite, the big building downtown, had the words, War is Peace, Freedom is Slavery, etc. There were a whole bunch of these equations.

So when you grew up, every time that you thought

of war, you would say, well, war is the same as peace and if you think that war is the same as peace, you are obviously incapable of thinking or arguing.

And if you think that freedom is slavery-- so people were paralyzed, and in that very same sense, people in education equated professionalism with keeping your mouth shut and with obedience to authority and with not rocking the boat.

Well, to equate professionalism with obedience to authority and not rocking the boat, is really the same as war is peace and freedom is slavery. It was equating professionalism with its very opposite in order to prevent teachers from being able to think about professional issues and what their status ought to be, because professionalism is the very opposite.

A professional is an expert, who, by virtue of his expertise has a high degree of decision making power. They are relatively unsupervised. Nobody is standing over the surgeon and tells him to cut a little bit to the left or a little to the right. Nobody stands over people in other professions. They are allowed to exercise judgment. And they have generally high status, they have a good deal of

decision making power and they have a very high level of compensation. And all of these things go together, add a good deal of respect and dignity in terms of how society treats them. All of these things go together and essentially the more I talk with teachers, yes, they still want a salary increase, and they still need more preparation time and they still want limits on class size--we are not finished with that agenda yet.

But they want more than that. More and more as I go to meetings, there is hardly a meeting where a teacher does not stand up and say, sure I want all of those things, but they are not really saying what I am mostly interested in, and that is dignity. Why are other people who perform these important essential functions within our society, treated differently and viewed differently than we are and what they are getting at and I have seen it, I have seen it in places right after an outstanding contract to bring home a huge amount of money and all sorts of increases, and then we bring some of these posters in, and sure they feel that the union has done a good job and they like the salary increase and they ratify the contract, and they still feel very, very bad about being teachers.



Very bad about it.

And we could get very good salary increases year after year and still not get at this very deep thing that is bothering our people, because they know and we know that without us, our society cannot function. There would not be any doctors, lawyers, dentists, accountants, or anybody else. And yet, we, who create all of these people are the lowest on their totem pole and are given no respect at all. And that is what many of our people want us to look at and want us to get at, and if we do not get at that, we are not doing our jobs.

So a good part of it is new protection, there is new direction that we have. That is to deal with this dissatisfaction and we are really dealing here with two issues.

One as to how to satisfy our members in terms of this need, and the other one, I submit that since our members really do--it is not just that they want it, they crave it. The strength of the desire and the need to have that type of recognition is so strong that I believe that any organization that provides a vision and an image, a way to how we can provide this will also have from a self interest point of view, one of the strongest and most powerful organizing tools that anybody

can have. If teachers of this country believe that an organization knows how to bring that status and that prestige and that entire package that goes with professionalism, then that will be a very great reason for them to join.

Now, we also, I think, ought to take a look at what is happening not just with teachers because what I just said about teachers is happening generally within our society. Once upon a time, most workers in our society worked for only one reason, they worked because they had to fill their bellies and those of their families and they needed shelter.

When I was growing up as a kid, I did not know of any people because they expected dignity on the job, or respect or anything else. They worked in sweatshops, they worked in coal mines, they worked on railroads, they worked in very difficult, hard, dirty jobs for long hours and they only expected as much pay as they could get, because that was the only reason that they were in it. There was no enjoyment from it and the other thing was that they wanted a union to come in to lay down a bunch of very heavy rules and the rules would say what it is that they could be compelled to do by the employer and what it is that the employer could not compel

them to do. They wanted a very clear line. Because when you are doing sweaty, dirty work that you are not interested in, the main thing that you want is a definition, you want to be saved from being forced to do a little more, or a little dirtier, and the rules were set down to protect you as much as possible.

Well, we have come a long way. That is not what our society is about anymore. Sure, there is still some people doing those jobs, and they will want those rules put down.

But most people in our society now are quite well educated and they do not want a rule book, what they want is a certain amount of decision making power. They want discretion. They do not just want a job that they are in there for the money, they want a job that gives them satisfaction. They want a job which enables them to have a good deal of decision making power and it is not just in teaching.

And so if you look at the report on the future of work which is also a report on the future of the labor movement, that was published by the AFL-CIO just a few weeks ago, one of the things that the AFL-CIO is dealing with is how can we organize more and more people into a trade union

movement when one of the things that unorganized workers are worried about--they say, yes, we think unions are pretty good but we are worried that if a union comes in here, not only will the boss give us a bunch of rules but we are going to get a union contract that is going to prevent us from exercising judgment and discretion and it is going to make our jobs a lot less pleasant, than they are.

So we have really got a new work force. As you heard last night, about 2/3 of all the workers in this country when asked, what do you think of your boss? They like him.

They think that he is a pretty good guy. They think that he is doing about as much as he can for them. We have taken a number of polls of what teachers think of their supervisors, and now, in the past, we used to go out and we used to do exactly what other unions did. We would give a big pitch about the horrible authoritarian fellow who runs the school and runs the school system and if you organize the union we are going to be able to punch him in the nose and get even and in unity there is strength and all of that.

And you can still say that and there will be about 1/3 of the people who you are talking to, will applaud

and will agree with you. But the other 2/3 of the people, teachers, just like other employees, generally think that the principal is a pretty good guy and he is trying to make the school work and if you go in and try to organize--I must say that that was surprising to me. As I read these polls, it was not just one place. And this even happens where the teachers are very demoralized, and feel very unhappy, the majority of them at most places where we have tested, show exactly the same results as we find throughout the private sector.

There is one other important thing and that is workers in the private sector and more and more teachers in schools realize that a relationship of conflict, an adversary relationship, that while it is necessary if the boss is going to hit you over the head, and if the boss is really going to treat you in a horrible way, you have got no choice, but to engage in a big fight.

However, they realize that it is harmful to their enterprise. Somebody who is out there in private business knows that if you engage in a long strike, that people are going to go out and buy somebody else's product while yours

is not around and people in schools now realize, and we realize that if we have a big fight with the Board of Education and we start calling them a bunch of incompetent nincompoops, who waste a lot of money and who do not know how to manage the school system and they say that we are a bunch of tenured incompetents who cannot be gotten rid of and who have bankers' hours and long vacations, that the public is believing both of us.

And if you have incompetent workers and incompetent management why should they give another nickel, if that is true? And why should they not look for an alternative to public education if our institution is so rotten from top to bottom?

Now, it may very well be that the people over in the Chrysler plant think that they have lousy management, and that the cars that the cars that are being produced, are not very good. It may very well be that management thinks that these employees are not doing such a good job. But I will tell you that that company is fighting for its life. You will not have any worker getting on television talking about how poor the processes are and how the cars are going to fall apart, and blaming management for it.

They know that they have a stake in having happy and satisfied customers and they are not going to go out and engage in that sort of conflict, because they know that the future of their industry is at stake.

Well, in the same way, the future of our industry is at stake, so that we are talking about a new set of relationships which are cooperative rather than adversarial.

And then my fifth point is that with all of these reports out there about the future of education and a nation at risk and the need for excellence, and everybody is saying something that is right on and it is wonderful and what they are saying is that you cannot have excellence without outstanding teachers.

And we also know that we have a problem. We are about to have a big teacher shortage. There are very few people who are training to become teachers. A large number of those who are in the pipeline who are training to become teachers, should not be. Some of them should but a large number of them should not be.

So we are about to go into a tremendous crisis. How are we going to get them and how are we going to keep them?

And if we do not get them or keep them, if in a few years the headlines are, Massive Teacher Shortage, Detroit Missing X Hundreds of Teachers, New York City Missing 5,000 Teachers, Board of Education Advertises for Anybody Who Can Pass the Thermometer Test. And then there is the feather test, you put the feather under the nostril and if it moves, it is breathing. Bring them into the classroom. If in this next period, as people are talking about excellence and about the importance of education, if this next teacher shortage is met with a massive reduction in teacher standards, the public will decide to leave this institution.

And so, you know it is not enough for us to go around saying tuition tax credits are bad, because if we have tuition tax credits children will go to different religious schools and they won't learn to live with each other and they will go to different racial schools and we will abandon whatever we have been able to succeed with in terms of integration.

That you will be able to have political groups having their schools and you will develop a political divisiveness and that you will have different language groups and you will not have the Americanization or the integration, all of those are true, but they are negative arguments however.



You cannot expect a parent who is worried about the education of his or her child to say that I am going to send my child to a poor public school because of these terrible political consequences. Each parent is going to make a choice based on what is good for the child and not on what is wonderful public policy in the long run or historically. And until we can stand up and say to parents, preserve public education because our schools are good places for you to send your children and they are better than those other schools that you are thinking of setting up and sending your children to, we do not have a very strong argument.

Now, how do we attract and keep good teachers?

Well, the same way that you attract and keep good lawyers, or anybody else. You pay them well, and you have conditions which enable them to do their work and get satisfaction from it but the other part is, you treat them well in terms of the things that I have just talked about. Think of schools and think of law firms.

Law firms do not advertise that they went out and hired lawyers fresh out of law school who were willing to work for \$14,000 or \$15,000. Nobody would take a case to a law firm that hired the cheapest available lawyers.

Time clocks, constant supervision, constant rating and evaluations. You know, our president in Texas, John Cole, he says, well I do not blame them, if you go out and hire a bunch of teachers who are willing to work for \$14,000 or \$15,000 I would not trust them either. I would keep watching them all the time.

Now, so there must be a reason why they take a job for that kind of money. So what we have got is a syndrome, unless we are able to get schools to respect teachers and their judgment and stop supervising them and time clocking them and treating them like human beings, we are not going to get good people in because educated people today are going to have many choices. And the number of people graduating high school and going into college and graduating college is about 20 percent smaller than the previous cohort. Everybody is going to be out there trying to get the good college graduate and we are not going to get them unless we treat them at least as well as they are treated elsewhere.

So this leads me to professionalism and the first thing that we have got to say is that there is no professionalism, professionalism is not what the NEA thinks that it is. They think that it is just a word.

I remember what it used to mean. We used to have teacher recognition day once a year. They used to come around and pin flowers to all the lapels and say that they recognized us as professionals. That was like, be kind to the handicapped week, and feel sorry for these poor souls who do not have any power to do anything for themselves.

Well that is not what professionalism is about. There can be no professionalism without high standards. There is no reason why the public should trust us with their children, should trust us with their textbooks, should trust us to select the curriculum unless the people that we bring into the field are outstanding people and we can say to the general public, look, before a person becomes a teacher, those people have been screened and we have reason to believe, sure, once in a while there is somebody who gets through who should not, just as in law or medicine or accounting or every field has a handful of people who should not be there, but we have a process of bringing people in which is basically going to guarantee to the general public that these are high caliber people and you can trust them.

Now, can we say that now?

We cannot.

And we cannot say it basically because this is the only occupation in this country in which we do not test people, give people a rigorous test before they come in.

I know that we all went to college but lawyers went to law school and they still have to take a bar examination. And doctors have gone to medical school and they have to take an examination. And everybody who is an actuary or an accountant or engineer, or an architect, everyone of these people went to college but they still have to take examinations.

Sure an examination will not tell you if a person is going to be a good teacher. You can pass a math examination and be a terrible teacher. But if you flunk the math examination you are not going to be a good math teacher no matter how wonderful your personality, no matter how motivated.

So an examination does not prove that someone is competent but it can show that someone is incompetent and should not be in a profession.

So we have come out for a national examination not a short answer, quickie, \$20, 3-hour examination of multiple choice, but an examination very much like lawyers and doctors take. Something that would take two or three days to take.

Something, yes, they can have some short answers, but a lot of essays, a lot of things that measure the judgment of an individual. Both in professional matters and in subject matter and I would like to point out, you know, if it is easy to get into a profession like teaching, easy come and easy go.

That is the old expression.

How many people have you met in this world who used to be teachers? Everybody used to be a teacher. I meet it all over.

I think that we would be the largest and most powerful organization in the country if we would just change our name to the American Federation of Ex-teachers. We would probably have 10 million members.

They would be all over. Now, how many ex-doctors do you know? How many ex-lawyers do you know? How many ex-architects do you know or ex-actuaries?

Why is it that in this profession people come and go and in the others they do not? Well that is easy, they are not paying anything to get in. I mean nobody is going to work to take and pass, the kind of examination-- and it is not just passing it on two or three days, it is the kind of effort that has to go into it over a period of

years, no one is going to make that investment and then abandon it very lightly.

On the other hand, no one who comes and becomes a teacher given the current lack of standards, thinks twice about leaving two years later, or four years later or five or ten years later. And that is also part of the reason that society does not have to pay for teachers very much. They could not get teachers to come in under current salaries and conditions if the standards were where they should be.

Now, we talk about what we have done with this issue. And we have not only got more publicity on this issue across the country and more favorable editorial comment, but I will tell you that the day after I made that speech about a national teacher exam, and by the way the third part of that examination is an internship, so that you spend two or three years in the classroom being helped by other teachers, is it not just pencil and paper stuff, it is actual functioning in the classroom and being helped over a period of time, but the day after I made that speech at the National Press Club in Washington, I flew out and I had a day of various meetings in Utah where we are doing some successful organizing.

And the day that I flew into Utah that morning,

there was the Salt Lake City newspaper with a big front page headline, it said, Union Boss Favors Tough Teacher Test.

Well, then I went around and made a whole bunch of speeches on this issue and the next morning a newspaper came out and it said, Speaker Reiterates Call for Strong Teacher Test.

And then the day after I left, was the headline, Educator Supports Strong Teacher Test. Now, please notice the progression from Union Boss to Educator, in 36 hours.

Now, that is not a joke. It is very serious. How can we get the public to understand that we are not merely interested in ourselves but we have a concern for our profession and our clients?

We did it in this case by saying that if such an examination is established and it will probably take about four or five years to do it, that within three years the American Federation of Teachers would refuse to accept into membership any person hired as a teacher by a school board who did not pass the examination and we challenged the NEA to do the same thing.

If the NEA accepts, then we will have a very powerful movement for the professionalization of teachers.

If they do not accept then there will be two organizations of teachers in this country, one which accepts only those who have met a standard and the other one which accepts the dum-dums, and if they want to have the reputation in this country as being the organization of those people who cannot pass the examination or flunk the examination, that is all right with me. There is no doubt who will end up representing the teachers in this country if that is the position that they take.

How am I doing?

I am overtime, yes.

Well, I would like you to look--in terms of professionalism--I would like you to look very carefully what is being done. There are a lot of things being done, little things across the country and I won't have a chance here to mention all of them or even most of them. But I want to point at one that is very outstanding and unique.

Fortunately it is beginning to spread and that is what is happening in Toledo, Ohio. Now, professionalism does not mean that each individual does anything thta he or she wants. That is not what professionalism is.

You go to a doctor and you do not expect that



that doctor is just going to say to you, well, most other doctors do it this way but I really love to be creative, so, -- that doctor would not last long and he certainly would not keep you there or me. So that professionalism does not just mean that you are allowed to exercise your judgment in any old creative way that you want.

Professionalism implies that there is a body of knowledge and that the people who are in the profession have that knowledge and that they keep shaping up their knowledge because they cannot know everything and they do that not because some supervisor of doctors or superintendent or principal of doctors stands over them, with some rating sheet, but because doctors talk to each other constantly and they read the professional literature and they talk to each other.

And essentially you have a system of peer communication. And peer involvement and it is not a boss or a supervisor, it is some other doctor. Now, if I asked some other doctor, what do you know about this, I am not saying that I am an incompetent doctor and I am not saying that I am stupid or anything like that, I am just acknowledging that the world of medicine is so big that no individual doctor can know everything and it very well maybe that next week

the same doctor that I asked a question is going to ask me about something that I know more about.

Now, what we need to develop in teaching for several reasons by the way and one of the reasons that we cannot keep and attract a lot of good people is that very few human beings want to spend their lives in a room locked up with a bunch of children. They need a life with other adults. They need grown-ups that they can talk to and share experiences with.

They need to have recognition from other adults. And so unless we develop a new type of life for teachers, and there you really ought to look at Toledo because there effectively we are involved in helping to select who will be employed as new teachers and then for a period of time, some outstanding member of ours for a three year period of time, serve as the people who help the new teachers. And they also after that period of time, take the responsibility of saying that some or one or two of these people really cannot make it.

Now, there has been a lot of emphasis on peer evaluation, which makes it look like we want teachers to become supervisors and inspectors and go around and looking at others

saying that you are incompetent and you should be fired, and that is silly. That is a very minor part of the process. The most important thing is to have outstanding teachers help other teachers. To give them every bit of help that can get and if you give new people, not just new people, but even people who are experienced, give them a lot of help, 99.9 percent of the time they will make it.

And if somebody does not make it after getting all of that help then they are really hopeless and not only is it better for children that they not remain in the classroom and better for us, in terms of our relationship with the public, but it is even better for them. I mean do you know anybody who is really a hopeless teacher who is happy?

The worst thing in the world is to be incompetent and walk into a room with 30 or 35 kids, boy, do they give it to you, instant punishment. I mean Dante in the Inferno -- Dante should have defined hell as a person who does not know how to teach walks into a classroom with 35 kids.

I suggest that you look at what is going on in Toledo because it really show the way, but it is not just that. It is peer involvement in terms of the selection of textbooks. It is peer involvement in terms of the kinds of

the materials that will be used, and can you imagine a doctor deciding that somebody else is going to tell him what instruments to use, or what medicines to prescribe, that this is going to come from elsewhere?

You know, in the last 15 or 20 years there have been all sorts of committees, legislatures, school boards, and others and they talk about the books are too difficult, let's make the words shorter and simpler. And now they are saying that the books are too easy and it is time to make the words bigger and harder. They say that these books are no good because there are not enough blacks in them and not enough hispanics, and not enough women and not enough labor leaders.

These books are no good because they deal with ancient times or ancient history and they are not relevant to what the kids want today. But in all of this discussion has anybody asked, what is a good textbook?

What is it that will help a child to learn? What is it that asks certain clear questions and presents concepts clearly, what is it that a child can go home with and spend a half an hour or an hour that will help that child to learn, instead of all of these other political and social agendas? They are good but the essential purpose of a textbook

is not all of these other things. The central purpose of a textbook is the same analogously as what the purpose of either a medicine or some instrument that a doctor uses in some other profession.

Why aren't teachers making those decisions?

So we have got this syndrome of low pay, low standards, low level of trust on the part of the public and on the part of supervisors, and constant supervision because because we are not trusted because of this low level.

So where do we have to go with all of this?

We have got to open up all of these questions and I would like to just give one other, one final picture as to where this would lead. And I talk about management. What is happening in some of our best companies in the United States?

What we are learning from Japan. And I will talk about a company, I think it is one of the Ford companies, and a Ford company in either Tennessee, or Kentucky and out of 30 different companies, that was the one that had the poorest record in terms of producing lemons. And they had all these recalls. By the way, I know that a lot of people do not like to compare an plant to a school, but you know, when

an auto plant, when they send this automobile along the assembly line and then at the end they find out that there are a lot of things wrong with it and then you read in the paper that they have got 400,000 autos that have to be recalled and that is very expensive to do. Well we have a similar process, you know, we do not start kids early enough and I know that we have big class size in the kindergarten and 1st and 2nd and 3rd grades so that the kids do not learn how to read and write, and count and then at the other end, we have remediation, and that is the same as the recall program and we have special education.

And we have anti-dropout programs, so that what we do is that we ruin the product in the first place by not doing the job right and then we have got all of these people recalling it to do it all over again.

It is easier to redo a car than it is to redo a human being who has lost faith in her own or his own ability to learn. Well why don't we learn from the Japanese?

We learn this. We learned in that company down there, that they were about to close the plant because it was producing so many lemons and they decided, wait a minute, we are going to try new management. So they sent people

there and they said we are going to try something new. We are going to talk to the people who work here and find out what has gone wrong.

And they went to this fellow and he is working in a pit and his job, they are making these little trucks. And he is in this pit where he has got a machine where the truck appears on the assembly line above him and there is a bolt there and he takes this instrument and pushes it up and pulls the trigger and that tightens the bolt. And then that goes on and the next truck comes along and does the same thing.

All day long he is doing that.

So the new manager, Japanese manager comes to him and says, hey, Jack, do you ever, tell me the truth, we won't hold it against you, do you ever miss that bolt and you do not tighten it?

And he says, well, you are sure that you are not going to use this against me? And he says, yes, I do.

How often does that happen?

He said once about every ten minutes or so.

What every ten minutes a car goes by and that thing does not get bolted on?

The worker says, yes.

Well why do you let it happen?

He says, look, do you think that it is easy to stand here all day long looking up and holding this heavy thing and going like that?

Do you know what happens to your neck? Every once in a while you get a crimp in your neck and you go like this and you cannot help it. It is involuntary and it is just like that and the minute that you go like that, the whole truck has gone by. And you feel bad about it because you know that the top is going to rattle and not only that but if the next buy is putting the next bolt on and happens to do the same thing with the next bolt, the whole thing could fall apart.

So they said, well how do you think that we could do it so that would not happen?

And he said, well, I have been thinking about this for a long time, sir, I really do feel bad about it. First if you would put a little pedal near my foot, so that every time that I would get one of these crimps, my foot would go down on the pedal, it would stop the assembly line and leave it there so that I could go like that and then I could



get it. So he says, that would help. And of course it would slightly slow down the assembly line, each time that I did it but you would not have to recall all of those cars.

But most of all, if you did not have me standing in this pit, holding this up, if you had it, couldn't you do it so that I would be standing above the car, because it is easier to look down and to hold something down than it is to hold it up and I would not have as many crimps.

Well, they did that and then they went to the next worker and they found out what made him do his job wrong and then they went to the next one and the next one.

And you know that company is now number one. And number one in excellence. And they did not give merit pay to the best workers, and they did not fire the guy who had the most crimps, anybody you are going to hire there is going to get crimps. It is just one guy is going to get one every ten minutes and the other guy is going to get one every 12 and aother one every 8 minutes.

See, about 85 percent of the things that are wrong on the job has nothing to do with the individual employee, it has to do with the way that the whole thing is organized.

So what happens in that form of management

is that really the individual worker becomes in a way the inspector and the manager of the work, not the guy who is the foreman. It is the foreman's job to put the pedal down there when I ask him to. It is the foreman's job to get the job changed so that I can do it from the top. His job is not to just keep watching me. He can watch me all that he wants, whenever I get the crimp in my neck, I am going to do that.

And if he fires me the next guy is going to do it too. So the whole concept that we have got to get away from an old style of management and the only way that we are going to improve the schools, and the only way in which teachers, you are going to get intelligent people coming in, the only way that you are going to do that, is to essentially give a tremendous amount of additional power and responsibility to the members of the profession.

Now, I would like to conclude by saying that in talking about these things in other places, people say, okay, so they are good ideas and we agree with you.

But you know, we are going to get killed by the NEA. They are going to go out there and they are going to talk about all of this professionalism and they are going to say, you know, that is going to hurt us and we should

change the rules and we should not rethink things, giving tests is a bad thing, saying that some teachers who are about to take the test are not qualified, lowers our image.

They are going to appeal and they have been appealing on a very, very narrow basis. And many of our members are very concerned.

Are we going to be taking the correct position but are we going to end up as a result of taking the correct position losing out in the competition with the NEA?

And it reminds me very much of going around 20 and 25 years ago, going into schools and meetings and talking to teachers and saying what the AFT wants to bring is collective bargaining and you know, some teacher would always his or her hand and say, I do not want collective bargaining, I want a salary increase.

Now, you see, they did not understand. Collective bargaining is a process. It is a change in power relationships. It is a change in status. They did not understand that just asking for a raise does not get it for you. That if you change a whole series of other relationships, the raise flows from that.

But that was very difficult and it took us

many years, it took a decade to explain to teachers in this country that if you want a raise, and you want smaller classrooms and you want to have an equal voice with management in terms of the determination of grievances, that you cannot just say that you want a raise, you have to say that you want collective bargaining. I want an institution to be established which will permanently deliver this for me and where it is not just a matter of annual begging.

Well, we are in a very similar position now. Look at the last election. Fritz Mondale, most of the public, we certainly did agree with them on almost all the issues. They agreed that the deficit should be solved, and they thought that we were spending too much on the military. And they thought that we should not cut social programs and they thought that education should be a major thing. They agreed on ERA, and they agreed on abortion issues, and they agreed on civil rights.

You look down the whole thing, everybody agreed with Mondale. Reagan won. Why?

I think that it would be a terrible mistake just to say that he has got a good tv personality. Hubert Humphrey had a better personality than Richard Nixon. I think that it would be a terrible mistake to say that it just slipped

television. I think that we should look beyond those.

Essentially one of the major things in that campaign was that you cannot win the support of people merely by having a bunch of negative criticisms. And in addition to negative criticisms, you have to have an overall positive image, of where you are going. And while Fritz Mondale and the Democratic Party in general had all the criticisms as to Reagan did this wrong and this and this and this, everybody said yes, you cannot get the American to really applaud and to go along board.

What Ronald Reagan did, was that he almost ignored all the issues. And what he did was to create a picture of a country where everybody is well to do, and where the economy is growing and where other countries respect us because we are strong, and he avoided all the issues and everybody agreed with Fritz Mondale, but here we had a huge landslide on the side essentially of some sort of a positive image and vision.

Now, obviously I believe that the American people were wrong in this. But I think that is a very important lesson to be learned. I do not believe the teachers of this country will ultimately be organized in a union whose sole

picture that it presents is one of, we do not like the way that the principal does this and we do not like the way that the State Legislature does that and we do not like this. A whole bunch of we are not getting enough money and our class size is too large, and all of these things.

That is not an image and it is not a picture and it is not a vision. I think that we can organize teachers by giving them a picture of what it is that they really want to be.

And I have touched on it before, they want to be respected in the same way that other professions are.

And I will conclude by telling a little story that a speaker gave to a group of teachers two weeks ago.

He said, I walk into an office at IBM, one of America's great companies, or I go into three or four other companies like that, some of these companies that are in this book, The Search For Excellence, and I walk through the corridors and I come up to a desk and there is somebody who is a secretary and I say to her what are you doing?

And she says, oh, I work for IMB and you know what we are into. And this is a great company and a great place to work. And I say to her, but you are just a secretary and she says, well, but you have no idea of how important,

this place could not function without what I do. And there she is totally involved and identified with the purposes of the noble aims of that company.

And then said this man, I go three blocks down the road and I walk into a school and I walk down the corridors and I go up to this person and I say, and what do you do here, and he said, I am only a teacher.

Now, just think about that for a minute. That right in this city we have private companies where a secretary is very, very proud, to be associated with that company and with that job and across the street you find a school where a person is involved in teaching and educating for the next generation of Americans who says, I am only a teacher.

Well that is what this is all about.

When we are finished there should not be a single person practicing this profession who ever again says those words, I am only a teacher.

I think that we have got to change that image.

I think that we have got to say that teaching, like law, medicine and other professions is not a place for dummies, it is a place for bright people.

It is a very popular idea with most teachers.

We have taken polls as a matter of fact, Lou Harris has done a poll for us and also Peter Hart has done a number of them across the country and we find that depending on the area, somewhere between 80 and 85 percent of all teachers favor the idea that teachers should have to take an examination as a part of the process of being employed and of being certified.

QUESTION: Are you going to consider that teachers who are currently employed, would have to take the exam also?

PRESIDENT SHANKER: We do not support that but that is happening in a few places. In Arkansas and Texas there is a retroactive requirement, although the test that they are giving is very minimal, it is almost a literacy test.

I think that it sends the wrong signal to somebody who is coming into teaching now, to say that somebody who was hired 20 years ago, could be thrown out in terms of putting a new requirement.

And it will make new people feel, well here I am and I am about to take a tough exam, what if somebody 20 years from now decides that they need a new exam and a tougher exam, then I will be out of a job basically.



You do not do it with doctors, even though the world of medicine has changed, you do not recertify them. And lawyers, and if you just do it with new people you will have tremendous change because one out of the two million teachers in this country are going to be hired in the next ten years. There is going to be a tremendous turnover.

QUESTION: How big a shortage are you talking about?

PRESIDENT SHANKER: Well right now, it is just a shortage in management science, and a few special fields. But this shortage is going to grow to be something like 20 percent of our work force over the next ten years, unless things change. We will have a shortage of about 350,000 teachers ten years from now.

But it has already started in cities like New York and Detroit and they have a lot of vacancies now, with teachers qualified according to our current standards.

Now, for instance, Florida has been giving a test for four years. The standard for an elementary school teacher in Florida is to pass a 6th grade arithmetic test. The kind of warm-up questions that we used to get in the 6th grade that you did in your head, and 35 percent of the

applicants failed that test.

And so that is what is happening with some of our situations. That should not be a test, I mean, somebody who is going to be teaching ought to know more than 6th grade arithmetic.

QUESTION: Mr. Shanker, you might as well go ahead and sit down, because there are a lot of people here who want to talk to you.

PRESIDENT SHANKER: All right.

QUESTION: I think that we would like to get a kind of recap of what you just talked about in terms of your recommendations for a testing standardized testing for teachers coming into the teaching field.

What exactly are you proposing?

PRESIDENT SHANKER: We are proposing that just as lawyers have to take a bar examination and doctors and architects and accountants and actuaries, and just about everybody else in our society, after they take their professional training, must take an examination to make sure that they really know both their subject matter and the other things that are necessary within the profession.

We think that you ought to have exactly the same for teachers. We believe that there ought to be a national

exam, because the states in the past could not be trusted.

If Alabama wants to employ teachers for \$11,000 a year, it basically has such a low standard, that to get people at that rate that the public cannot be guaranteed that there will be any level of teaching quality that is assured.

Now, we have had 30 reports that came out last year, A Nation at Risk and others, and there is general recognition that the futurability of our country to compete is going to depend upon whether we can get enough teachers who are able to teach these new required courses that are now required of all students.

And we believe that there ought to be a national standard set up in three areas.

First, a teacher ought to know his or her subject matter, and secondly there ought to be an extensive examination and whether the teacher knows about child psychology, and how to group children and how to make professional judgments, if one approach does not work, what is the second one or third approach that ought to be used.

And professional public policy issues--teachers ought to be able to discuss with the parents and the general public why we promote children and why certain children are

not promoted and why children are placed.

And third, there ought to be an actual internship, the same kind of thing that the doctors do. That is, you could have somebody that is very good at pencil and paper but does not know how to work with children. So that is the third part of it.

Now, the examination should not be short answers. It should be very much like a bar examination. It might take two or three full days to answer those questions. It should be difficult. Because if it is difficult, then several things will happen. One there will be more of a commitment on the part of the teachers to stay and nobody leaves, becomes a doctor and then decides to leave or a lawyer or any other field, very few, the world is filled with ex-teachers because it does not take to get in and nobody cares very much if they leave.

And you cannot run a school system that way any more than you can run a law firm if every year you lost 20 percent of your people and you constantly kept getting new people in.

QUESTION: If that were the case, how many teachers do you think who are in the business now, might decide

drop out, how many do you think would pass the test?

PRESIDENT SHANKER: I am not advocating that you apply it to the present people. There is a reason why the people that we have right now happen to be much better qualified than the people we are about to get.

We still have a handful of people from the Great Depression of the 30's who are outstanding and came in because there were no other jobs.

We have quite a few men who came in because if you became a teacher in New York or Detroit or Chicago, you avoided the Korean or Vietnamese War, so that we had a lot of very talented people who might have gone into law, or some other field but who became teachers.

And then we have, of course, very talented women who could only go into teaching or nursing up until the present time. Most of those women are not going into teaching now. I mean, half the people in law school, are now women. And a substantial number in medical school and business management so that what I am saying is that the teachers that we have now, are much more highly qualified than the teachers that we are about to get.

Secondly, I think that if you decided

to retest the people that you have got right now, you would discourage other people from coming in because they would feel that whatever the qualifications are now, here I will work very hard to become a teacher and then 15 years from now, somebody will decide to give me a still new test. If you create insecurity, you are not going to attract people.

Third, one out of the two million teachers in this country are going to be replaced in the next ten years. And we have an aging teaching force and a high degree of turnover, so that you can substantially change the people who are in teaching merely by having an entry examination because of the tremendous turnover that we are experiencing.

QUESTION: What can the state departments of education or the state legislatures do to foster the professionalization of teaching that you were talking about?

Or is that something that has to come from within the profession?

PRESIDENT SHANKER: Well I think that state departments and legislatures, I think that this is not going to happen unless there is general cooperation on the part of everybody.

There is no question that teachers up until

now have been locked into children and that they have not been accustomed to evaluating textbooks, they have not been given the opportunity to work with peers to help them improve instruction or to develop materials. They have not been involved in the question of how should a school be organized? And so this really involves a process. You need state departments of education who would encourage such efforts and make them possible. And then you need cooperation on the parts of teachers and supervisors to make it happen.

This will not happen overnight. It is like what happened with the professionalization of doctors. That did not happen in one year. That took forty years and the same with law. And the field of business management. We have a number of examples out there of occupations that today are very respected and very professionalized, even though they still have problems. Nobody is going to say that medicine is without problems or law, but it took many years and I think that what we are embarking on here is something that will probably take 25, 30 or 40 years.

QUESTION: But are there any things that could be passed by a legislature that would help you along?

PRESIDENT SHANKER: Well all that you can do,

is I think remove, you see, I think that the whole idea of professionalism means that it cannot be done from the top. One of the things that is happening now with all of these educational reform laws is that a state legislature passes a bill that is 150 pages long that tells teachers what books to use and how much time to spend on this and who gets promoted, and who does not and you know what the bright kids who are out there in college say?

They must think that teachers are a bunch of idiots. They do not pass laws like this telling surgeons what to do and telling anybody else what to do but the teachers are viewed as a bunch of idiots where they have to legislate and tell them everything to do.

So legislatures should not be telling teachers what to do. What they might have to do is to remove certain restrictions that exist. For instance, if there are laws that say the school board shall select textbooks, then that ought to be modified. Maybe a school board ought to be able to have a voice on textbooks in terms of representing community values, but the question of whether something is a good textbook or not in terms of education, that should not be in the hands of a lay school board.



That should clearly be in the hands of professionals. And so that there are modifications of that sort that need to be made. Probably there are laws that say that a principal is responsible for one set of things and a superintendent for another and those ought to be relaxed in order to allow teachers over a period of time--for instance, I am sure that the whole business of evaluating teachers probably now the law says that the principal and the superintendent are responsible for that.

But in Toledo, you have a group of teachers who actually help teachers during that first three years, and at the end of the three years, Jack, we tried to do everything that we could for Jack, but he really is not qualified.

Now, there has got to be a legal ability to do that.

QUESTION: Is not any proposal to seriously improve the quality of education run directly against the budgetary policies that are now being pursued both at the national level and at the state level?

PRESIDENT SHANKER: There is no question about it that if we stay within current budgets then we might as well give up, we cannot do anything.

You are not going to get people who know mathematics or science or people who are very good at using the language to come and work for \$15,000 a year. And be locked in a room for five periods a day with 34 children. I mean, just imagine yourself as an English teacher, 34 students five periods a day, and 170 students and you have to mark their papers, you bring home a paper and it takes you three to five minutes, you are just not going to do that. And you are told exactly what to do.

It is not going to happen.

Now, I think that there is in spite of the Reagan policies, education largely is a state and local matter.

QUESTION: What is your attitude towards the development, you made a reference in your speech to presenting a positive vision as opposed to the negative criticisms of state legislatures, and you now have the decision by the-- I think that it is the NEA affiliate in Mississippi to call a state wide strike, because when you referred to the \$11,000, I think that it is Mississippi where they start at \$11,000?

PRESIDENT SHANKER: Yes.

QUESTION: What is your attitude towards that type of thing?

PRESIDENT SHANKER: Well I think that it is very unfortunate, but you know what happened there?

Governor Winter came along and they passed a large tax increase in order to be able to raise the salaries of teachers up to what the average was in southern states, which would have been very large, a \$7,000 raise.

And then Winter left, he ran for the Senate and a new governor came in and they spent most of the money on other things. And now the teachers are just angry and bitter because there they are. The whole state has gone through this process of improvement and reform and they actually had the money and they spent it on something else.

I mean I do not think any strike or confrontation helps but the interesting thing is that whoever thought that the teachers in Mississippi would go out on strike?

And secondly, that the public is supporting the teachers, in a state which is basically very conservative and very anti-labor.

The third very interesting is that there are districts in Texas like Dallas, that are actively recruiting the striking teachers, and saying, if you are being mistreated here, come on to Dallas because we will pay you a lot more and we need you. So the teacher shortage is now so great

that even states that are not very pro-union instead of blacklisting the strikers, they are actually trying to hire them and lure them away.

QUESTION: I understand in Mississippi, that the AFT is not participating in the strike though.

PRESIDENT SHANKER: We have not participated in the strike up to now because we believe that as long as the legislature is meeting and is discussing a salary increase which they were at least up until yesterday. I do not know if they still are. I do not believe in pulling the trigger and shooting somebody when it is still possible that they are perfectly peaceful and friendly.

I can understand the anger and the frustration but still I could see going on strike after you had tried to reason with them and done everything that you could and then they did something awful, that is the time to decide whether a strike is the right thing.

But while they are still meeting and still discusssing something, I do not think that was right and I do not think that was helpful.

QUESTION: The teachers have been told that if they do not return to work, they will be fired.

PRESIDENT SHANKER: Well that is something that I was told that a number of times, when I led strikes and I am still alive.

QUESTION: You do not think that it is--

PRESIDENT SHANKER: Well if the state does that they will have to go and find, I do not know how many thousands, how many thousand teachers are in Mississippi?

They are going to have to hire 26,000 people to work at \$11,000 a year who know mathematics, and chemistry and physics and where are you going to find them?

QUESTION: So you think that it is an empty threat?

PRESIDENT SHANKER: It may not be an empty threat. They may decide to destroy their school system. You know, maybe they do not care about their kids. I mean, I do not assume that people are rational. If they were rational it would be an empty threat because no where are they going to get 26,000 people to work for that kind of money under those conditions.

QUESTION: You are talking about how the test is necessary in the face of upcoming shortages because if you do not have some way of screening out who is good and

who is not, they are going to hire people who are not certified or whatever, to meet the shortages, but by making the standards of that type, I am from Ft. Wayne, Indiana, and in Indiana, if you cannot find someone who meets the standards, you can pretty much hire anybody.

So if they bring in tests in the schools and the schools in Indiana are raising the admissions to teacher programs and they are changing the certification procedure of that, etc., there is going to be this shortage if the bright people are not attracted in, there is going to be this shortage and they are just going to have an emergency and hire anybody who has had two college classes in math to teach math.

PRESIDENT SHANKER: Well I would like to see a law that says that practice teaching without a license is the same as practicing medicine without a license. That you could be thrown in jail for it and then I would like to say that you cannot have a license unless you pass the test. So if you cannot hire enough teachers because then you just have to improve your salaries. You do what any good company does out there. Suppose a company needs a computer specialist, and needs a lawyer or a designer or needs a sales manager, and they advertise and they say we would like an outstanding

architect for \$14,000 a year and if nobody show up who is an outstanding architect then you offer \$15,000 and an extra week's vacation and then if that does not work, you offer \$17,000 or something else. There is no reason why teaching should not be subject to the same market forces as every other occupation. As long as it not subject to market forces what you are going to get are below par people who are marginal and are willing to do this for some reason, namely because they cannot find anything else.

They were closed one year for three or four months because they had no money to pay personnel and the teachers would go out on strike to get their salaries, and then the public would come and vote down the thing again. Parents started taking their children out of public schools and putting them into private schools. It had all the syndromes of a downward spiral.

And then along came a new superintendent and the president of our local, Dal Lawrence, they are both very creative people, and they both said, look this system is going down and we have got to turn it around.

One of the things that they agreed to was, that a certain number of teachers, let's say 13 teachers

who were outstanding, by agreement between the union and the superintendent would be taken out of the classroom for three years and then they would go back. For those three years they would be the people who would hire new teachers and train them. They would say to the new teacher, try this lesson, if you do not like that, so I will walk into this other class and try something else..

And that at the end of that period of time that they would also be in a position to recommend which teacher should get tenure and which teacher should not get tenure. Now, after three years another group of teachers will take this responsibility. Now, that is not all that they do. They also have an intervention program.

Suppose that you had a person who is a good teacher but 15 years later falls apart. And everybody in the school building knows that that teacher just is not functioning any more. The same group of teachers can get together and go to a teacher who is falling apart, and say, look, everybody in the school knows that you are falling apart and there is a problem, we want to help you. We are going to help you as much as we can. And that process is one of giving help, if the help works, fine. Then the teacher is certified as



working all right.

However, if the help does not work, then it is understood that there will be procedures to remove that teacher from the system. Now, what did that do?

First, the public realized that the teachers and the union had a commitment to quality education and they changed their attitude towards the bond issues and the budget and they started supporting schools, instead of not supporting them.

Secondly, the teachers who were selected and given this training were outstanding compared to previous teachers who were just thrown into the classroom without any sort of help.

Third, the fact that you had a substantial number of teachers within the system helping others shaped up their own teaching, because they started asking, how am I going to help this person?

What is it that is good? What works and what does not work?

And this began a discussion among their colleagues within the school about how can you help others?

So there was a whole process of improvement

and a process that they started studying what is it that research shows?

How do you evaluate people? How do you help people? So that there is an entire process of uplift within this -- by the way these teachers maybe in the past would say, well that principal is just snooping around evaluating people. But now the teachers themselves are involved in it and they understand some of the problems that evaluators and supervisors faced before and since they are classroom teachers, they talk to other teachers and they sell the idea that it is very important to improve the quality and the standards and gain additional public support.

Now, we have seen polls of teachers in Toledo and I have supervisors I might say. Supervisors at first felt very threatened by the whole thing. The principal would say, hey if the teachers are going to be helping other teachers and evaluating, what is my job?

But basically if you go to Toledo now, you will find the overwhelming majority of teachers are proud of their involvement in it, and they think that it is an excellent program and that it has improved the schools and the principals also say that it is a better program than what they had before.

So what you have is instead of a traditional labor/management relationship where management is looked upon with hostility by the union, you have a new sort of a relationship. It might be very much like what Chrysler did to turn the company around, where everyone, management and the employees, realized that if they did not pull together, if they kept fighting each other, the whole company would go down and they had to turn it around. And I am sure that they developed very new relationships at every level, in that company and the same sort of thing is happened in Toledo.

QUESTION: Before I go, I would like to have you repeat what you were telling Jim Fritz, of Channel 7, just before I walked in about the testing, the 6th grade level testing that you were talking about?

PRESIDENT SHANKER: Yes, there are now many state examinations and we are glad that there are state examinations. They are certainly better than nothing but most of them are not very good.

One example is that the State of Florida started testing teachers four or five years ago and in order to be an elementary teacher in that state, you have to pass one part of an examination, there is an arithmetic examination

which tests 6th grade arithmetic. Each question is one of these simple questions that you used to get as a warm-up to do in your head, that is, everything is divisible by 5 or 10 or 0 and nothing is left over. It is multiple choice. Three of the answers are clearly ridiculous. One of them is the obvious one-- in spite of that, 35 to 40 percent of the perspective applicants failed that examination.

Now, this gives you an idea of why you need a standard. First of all, many teachers do not take the exam in Florida, because they feel that they cannot pass examinations. They go elsewhere so that the 35 or 40 percent who failed in Florida, I would guess that in a state that had no examinations the percentage of failures would really be higher.

This means that it might very well be that half of the people preparing to teach in elementary school do not know any arithmetic.

What does that mean for the next generation? Well, if you have got a child going thorough elementary school and if every second teacher does not know any arithmetic, how are you going to teach algebra, chemistry or physics? How are you going to do all of these things in secondary school that all these new reform proposals require?

Secondly, even a person who passes a test down there, are you telling me that a person who is teaching in elementary school can get by with only 6th grade arithmetic?

I mean does not a teacher have to know more than the children that the teacher is going to be teaching? Suppose a child does not understand the area or the circumference or the volume and you have not reached the child, don't you have to approach it a second way and a third way and a fourth way and a fifth way? And can you really approach it in two or three or four or five different ways if your level of understanding is exactly the same as that of the child whom you are supposed to be teaching?

It is ridiculous. It is a ridiculously low level.

QUESTION: What kind of support are you getting from other teaching organizations for standardized tests?

PRESIDENT SHANKER: I am getting support from almost everybody, except for the other teacher organizations, the National Educational Association is opposed to it.

QUESTION: Why?

PRESIDENT SHANKER: They believe that tests do not measure the ability to teach and I agree with that. They only tell you who does not know their subject matter,

that will tell you who should not teach, but the fact that somebody passes a test does not mean that they should teach. You still have to see how they work with children. But if somebody fails a test they definitely should not teach.

In other words, this is a screen. The second thing is that they said that each state should have its own standards, and I am really shocked that the NEA which believes that the Federal Government should finance 1/3 of education and therefore control it, supported the Federal Department of Education, believes that the Federal Government can mandate bi-lingual education and all sorts of other things, the only thing that they do not want the Federal -- my test would not be a Federal Government test, it would be a national exam, the same as the bar exam is by and large, national.

But it would not be controlled by the Government, it would be controlled by the profession.

The other thing that they say is that examinations work against minorities. And I think that is a serious issue. Minorities do not at this time because of present and previous discrimination in the state of education for minorities within this country do not do as well. But the Florida example on that is rather interesting. They have instituted tests for both students for promotion and for teachers and the first

year they gave the test it was devastating, for minorities, and each year minorities have improved, until now, the pass scores are almost the same as they are for the white population.

But they did more than just put a standard out there, they did put special assistance programs in for minority students in the colleges to help them with the programs that would be on the examination.

So I think that the point that this will have an adverse affect on minorities, is a good point but the point is not that you just get rid of standards, that does not help minorities or anybody else. The point is that you give more help to minorities to make sure that they do qualify. The same as is being done, where it is being--I mean there is a program done by a foundation now, which is going to double the number of black doctors in this country in a few years. They are not doing it by creating two classes of doctors. They are doing it by getting kids who are in the 8th grade and who show some promise, and giving them a heck of a lot more help than the system would ordinarily give them so that they can really make it on the same standard as anybody else.

QUESTION: Besides just going around and talking to members of the AFT, what are you doing to actually set

up a panel and how long do you think that this will take?

PRESIDENT SHANKER: First of all, I do not think that we should set up the panel because I think that if it is viewed as a teacher union panel that it would not have as much support, as it would if it were more independent. I believe in the next six months, such a panel will be created and it will probably will be created by a consortium of groups or one or more major foundations and that would be made up of members of the profession and some members of other professions.

But I think that you will see it in place in a very short period of time.

I mean, we are encouraging it and we are meeting with such groups and foundations to urge that it be done, but it will not be appointed by us or owned by us, it will clearly be an independent group.

QUESTION: Will the NEA come out and support this?

PRESIDENT SHANKER: Well, the NEA has said that--they started out by saying that they do not want any testing at all and they have now said that it is okay to have a test however, it should not be the single, determining factor in whatever person becomes a teacher. Well, what does that mean?



That means that a person who is supposed to be a math teacher and fails the written examination, could still become a teacher if the person had outstanding other qualities; personality, motivation and everything else. In other words, it is okay to give a test as long as it does not count.

QUESTION: Well, do you think that the test should be the sole determining factor?

PRESIDENT SHANKER: I think that every item that is necessary to be a teacher should be the sole determining factor. That is, I think that if a person is going to be a math teacher and does not know math, that is enough.

I also think that if a person does know math but if the personality is so horrible that they cannot possibly relate to children that that should be the sole determining qualification. We say, look buster, you know your math you are terrific at it, but you are horrible with children, you hate them and they hate you and you will never work with them.

Yes, I think that it should be the sole determining factor.

QUESTION: (Inaudible.)

PRESIDENT SHANKER: Yes, but whereas they think

that one of these factors could override another one, I think that none of these factors should override any of the others. That if a person is to become a teacher, they should know all of them, should have all of them.

QUESTION: (Inaudible.)

PRESIDENT SHANKER: It depends on the state, but I think in those states that pay poorly, you would get a lower percentage and in those states that pay higher, you would get a higher percentage. But I would say, certainly better than 90 percent.

QUESTION: I am not quite sure why you think that today's teachers are better than the ones coming in.

You gave three reasons. One is that some of the teachers that we have today, came in during the depression when they could not find a job and that seems to say that they could not do what they wanted to do and so they became teachers.

You said that there were some men who became teachers because they did not want to be drafted and so they became teachers.

Some women became teachers because of discrimination so that they could not do what they wanted to do, so they

became teachers. So it seems to me that you are saying that you have good teachers, because they could not do what they really wanted to do and so they became teachers.

PRESIDENT SHANKER: Well, that is true of a lot of people who became other things too. I mean, people generally what you can become depends upon the resources of your family and how long you can go to school. It depends on a lot of things, I mean, do not think that everybody who is a dentist wanted to be a dentist. I mean, looking at somebody's mouth eight hours a day and taking care of the plumbing of the teeth is not necessarily the most interesting job in the world, but somebody decided at a certain point that given the resources that I have, and what my family can do and the amount of time that I have, and people become--I mean this is not unique to teachers. That does not make that person a bad dentist and it does not make the people who are there now--

QUESTION: It does not speak well of the motivations of the individual to say that they became teachers because they could not do what they really wanted to do. It does not say whether they are good or bad teachers, it just does not sound like a very good argument to say that this group

of people is a better group of teachers than the ones that are coming after.

PRESIDENT SHANKER: Yes, but what it does is this, these people are brighter, okay? They are more talented. In other words, you look at the SAT scores of people who became teachers in the 50's and the 60's and 70's and it is higher than the people who are now enrolled in teacher training programs. It has gone down very substantially.

QUESTION: Along with everyone else's.

PRESIDENT SHANKER: Not along with everyone else's. For this profession it has gone down, but it has not gone down for lawyers, and it has not gone down for doctors and it has not gone down for--some groups it has gone up, business administration used to be low and it has gone up.

But this has gone down.

Secondly, there is a factor that works just in terms of the nature of the work, to get rid of those people who are not motivated and who cannot do the job well, and that is the fact that you have got 30 or 35 kids in front of you and that it is a very brutal type of occupation for a person who is not motivated and who does not have talent. I mean to just lock yourself up in a room with 35 kids for

a couple of hours and see what happens.

I mean if you go down to your--take any major school system in this country, take Chicago, Detroit, New York, and New York employed about 2,500 new teachers last September and 900 left after the first two weeks, so that the people who are not motivated, they leave pretty quickly. There is a very high turnover rate.

When I talked upstairs about the millions of ex-teachers, in this country, part of it is salary and part of it is conditions but part of it is that if you are not very, very strongly motivated, it is not like one of these things where you are sitting at a desk and if you do not care, it does not make any difference.

You know, this is like being a lion tamer, you are locked in the cage with the lion and you are not really motivated or too much interested. Those are a lot of little lions out there and they will get you.

QUESTION: What is an appropriate starting salary for a teacher?

PRESIDENT SHANKER: You should pay the smallest amount that you can possibly pay and get the quality that you want. There is no appropriate, it is the same as any other

field--what is the appropriate amount for a computer person?

What is the appropriate amount for anything?

The appropriate amount is that you set the qualifications and then I do not expect you to pay one nickel more than you have to pay in order to get a qualified person. That might be--it will be different in different places. I imagine that if you are on a very beautiful--I mean I was once up in and spoke to teachers up in Alberta, and teachers who are teaching right next to BAMF and they are on a lake are generally willing to work for about \$2,000 less than teachers who are somewhere out in some place, I mean it is the same as what you have to compensate, in order to compensate a doctor to work in a place that a doctor does not particularly want to live, you probably have to pay more. You ought to let the market forces work. The one thing that you should not do is to say, well I cannot get a person who really knows mathematics, and who really knows how to teach kids, so therefore, I will go out and hire anybody.

QUESTION: Do you know if Millage (ph.) approval rates have improved in the last couple of years?

PRESIDENT SHANKER: Well, it is only about a year and a quarter since the Nation At Risk so that I

don't know, but I do know that there has been tremendous activity on the part of state legislatures. You have got about \$2.7 billion increase in California over two years, and \$2.6 billion in Texas. You have had over a billion in two years in Florida, and you have had a statewide penny sales tax increase in Tennessee which produces an awful lot of money that is used for education only. A place like New York which usually has about \$250 million state aid increase had \$500 million last year and it looks like it is going for \$600 million now.

So you will get \$1.1 billion which usually would have been a five or six year sum. And you have got Oklahoma now considering legislation. You do have a national movement and there are substantial resources going in, but I do not know what the local vote rate is, but a lot of state activity.

QUESTION: What can states do for and through teachers to improve the quality of education in the schools?

PRESIDENT SHANKER: Let me just say one other thing and that is that if you had a national examination it would also--one of the other big problems that we have is teacher education and what is the nature of teacher training?

And if you had a national examination that

would pretty much control what teacher training institutions would do because if teacher training institutions did not produce competent people in these areas, then the majority of their students would flunk the examinations and the reputations of those schools would go down.

In Florida, when they instituted the examination, the State said that any teacher training institution where X percentage of their graduates failed the examination, then we will close down that institution. So that clearly changed the whole nature of who it is that is taken and what the nature of their curriculum was.

And the question is what can states--

QUESTION: --do for and through teachers to help improve education, counteract the problems in the Nation at Risk, I guess.

PRESIDENT SHANKER: Well, I think the main thing that you have got to do is that I think first of all you have to set a set of rigorous standards for teachers. Secondly, you have got to pay the market rate, and that includes entry salary and it includes some sort of a career line.

I think, third, after you have now had as a part of this rigorous entry, you have had an internship and



you have had the guts to get rid of all of those people who are not particularly good, at the beginning, do not wait for 15 years to find out that somebody is not so good. Have a very high standard in the first place.

And then, give the people some power and time, that is, have the teachers in the school sit down collectively and say, look, it is up to you as a group. You now have a faculty senate, what does not work here? What are the major problems of this school--dropouts?

Poor reading ability, truancy, you name them in this school, what are the three or four major problems? Now, as a faculty how can we restructure and change this school in terms of what we do with students and how we involve them and what we do with their parents and the number of semesters a year and the type of the curriculum that we give them and everything.

And what can we do in order to solve the problems that this school is faced with? And by the way, one of the things that you would have is that schools would try things out and that some of the things would not work.

Now, in medicine if a doctor tries something and it does not work, he publishes it and everybody says,

gee, he is a terrific doctor, nobody will ever die of that same cure again, he has added to the body of knowledge. Have you ever heard of a principal or a superintendent or a teacher who obtained a reputation by saying that he tried something and it did not work?

You have got to develop a different philosophy of what this is about. This is not public relations and this is not massaging people, this is a search for developing a structure for the delivery of a very important service to human beings and you have got to involve everybody in that search and essentially you have to empower the people to make changes, provided that those changes can be justified by improvements in education, not just any change because they want to be creative.

Now, I happen to think--I mean I have some notions as to what they would find. I think that they would find that if a kid gets into the fourth grade and still cannot read, write or count, that there is not too much that you can do with him after that. That you need tremendous resources in the early grades in order to boost not only the basic abilities but to boost the self-image of kids.

If a kid gets into the fourth grade and says,

Gee, I am great, I can read, and I can write and I can count, he is ready to conquer the world. Then you can give him some interesting things to read. If a kid gets into fourth grade and sees everybody else is reading, writing and counting, I am dumb, I have now tried it for four years, and I cannot do it.

If you make me do it, I am going to hit you back or I am not going to come, that is really what they are saying when they are truant, they are saying, hey, you cannot kid me, each and every one of us has a certain limit. We will try up to a certain point and then at a certain point, I say, I cannot do it, whatever it happens to be, it could be a sport or it could be something that you are learning. Kids are the same way.

So you really need to--you see the crazy thing about all of these reports is that they all dealt with highschoools. Well, sure the kids are failing in high school but they did not really fail then. I could tell you, 99 percent of the time, I could look at a fourth grade kid and I could tell you who is going to fail in high school. It did not happen in high school, that is how they got them.

And it is kind of too late to do anything about

them.

I think that you will find that you would have to put a lot of resources into the first four years. I think that you would find that having a first grade that lasts a whole year, is a terrible mistake. It means that the teacher is waiting for a whole year to test a kid, and the kids are waiting a whole year. I think that you probably ought to have an organization in the first grade where the kids move ahead every two weeks, and you can find out what do we expect this child to learn in two weeks and are we doing it?

And if we did not do it, let's get some bright high school kid to work with this kid after school and help them.

QUESTION: So would an Indiana program like Prime Time where they are trying to reduce class size within K through 3 would that be a good way of getting at that sort of?

PRESIDENT SHANKER: That is mechanical, that is good, but that is only one thing. Yes, reduce class size, but then what do you do with the reduced class size?

If you reduce class size and see if you have got a teacher teaching 35 kids and the next day you say you

say that you only have 17, habit is very strong and the chances are that the teacher will come and do the same thing, give the same lecture to 17 kids as the teacher did to 34. So you really have to sit down with the teachers and say, hey, now that we only have 17 what can we do that we did not use to do?

Do we have to stand and lecture, can we sit with some small groups and do things that are totally different?

So I think that if you did this, what would result is that you would have a smaller class size and you would have a lot of tutorial functions and you would break up the year into much smaller units so that a kid would not feel that he is a whole year behind and it is hopeless, it would be a little thing that he has got to learn that he did not learn in the last two weeks.

I think that if a student got to the fourth grade and still did not know how to do it, you would not send him to what is now considered a school, you would have a different experience, like Boy Scouts, or Civilian Conservation--you would change the whole--you would say, okay, Johnny, you are not going to that school any more, you are now in the something, the Detroit Peace Corps. You would change the

whole environment. You are still trying to get him to read write and count. I used to do that, I used to be a boy scout leader, I got a lot of kids who did not read, write and count in school, they learned in the Boy Scouts, because they wanted to become first class Scouts and they learned there. It did not look like school to them. We were out on a hike and I would sit there with a book and show them how to read a compass and how to make a map and how to add this and they did it there, they did not do it in school.

We have all had that experience of somebody being frustrated and giving up in one area, but I think that if you really involved people you would get all these structural changes of how--by the way, I think in high schools, you would probably allow kids to study independently a lot more.

Why do you have to stand and lecture all the time? Video discs and cassettes are now a lot better at showing kids what life is like in Alaska, or what George Washington did in Valley Forge or the drama of how the Declaration of Independence was written, instead of the teacher standing there and lecturing 85 percent of the time, which is what all our research tells us that there ought to be a lot of independent study and the teacher ought to be more of a coach.

And sit with Johnny, Johnny what did you intend to write, does that really express your thought, and is there a more dramatic way of starting this?

To develop the critical thinking skills, the organization of thought, writing, persuasion, the teacher evaluates the materials that are used on video discs, the teacher sets the prescription in terms of the order of things, but you could get totally different structures in schools, through the use of technology, independent study. And I think that if you allowed people to sit down and think about how to reorganize it that you would get a much more effective structure, than you have now, at every level. It would be different in high school than it would be in the early grades, but it would all be very different.

(The press conference was over.)